DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

POST-ADOPTION MARRIAGE STRENGTHENING
IN FAMILIES WHO HAVE ADOPTED SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

SEMI-ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT- COVER SHEET

AWARD NUMBER: 90CO1008/04

BUDGET PERIOD: 10/01/07 - 09/30/08

PROJECT PERIOD: 10/01/2004 - 09/30/2009

GRANTEE NAME AND ADDRESS: Post Adoption Marriage Strengthening Program
Children’s Home Society of Florida
1801 Miccosukee Commons Dr.
Tallahassee, FL 32308

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 850-921-0772 / 229

PROJECT TITLE: Post-Adoption Marriage Strengthening in Families
Who Have Adopted Special Needs Children

PERIOD COVERED BY REPORT:

October 1, 2007 thru March 30, 2008

NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF PROJECT DIRECTOR OR PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:

PROJECT DIRECTOR
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DATE OF REPORT: APRIL 22, 2008

REPORT NUMBER: (NUMBER SEQUENTIALLY BEGINNING WITH 1) 1

NAME OF FEDERAL PROJECT OFFICER: Carole A. Thompson

COMMENTS: None
Adoption Opportunity Grant
Post Adoption Marriage Strengthening Program

Children’s Home Society
1801 Miccosukee Commons Drive
Tallahassee, Florida 32308

Semi-Annual Progress Report
March 30, 2008
Award No. 90-CO-1008

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MAJOR ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING THIS PERIOD:

The following have been accomplished this period:

- The program has been increasing proactive efforts of community population and agency awareness. As a result, the program has seen a 60% increase in interest from the targeted population within three of the last six months.

- PAMS continues to develop partnerships with primary agencies and community associations throughout Leon, Wakulla and Gadsden Counties.

- The program has provided presentations to intra-agencies with Children's Home Society of Florida. This has provided insight on the need for relationship enrichment services like PAMS for other programs.

- Over 90% of clients that have participated in the PAMS program were satisfied with the overall services that they have received.

- Over 200 families in the 2B area were reached through mailout of the quarterly newsletter and subsidy check flyer.

- Over 250 prospective couples were informed of the program through MAPP training, recruiting information and community group presentations with incentives to participate (raffles for respite weekends and other giveaways), and presence on the community's electronic “billboards” and other referral resources.

- PAMS is currently discussing (post-grant) future opportunities for the program. One possibility is opening the program to service more than just subsidy adoptive families. This would include private and international adoptive families, which are also Special Need adoption families. The program will continue to brainstorm on future plans for PAMS.
OUTREACH ACTIVITIES:

The program participated in the following outreach activities within the past six month:

- In November, PAMS participated in the National Adoption Day Celebration, providing informational material and “goodie” bags to all families who finalized adoptions that day. Estimated Attendance: 105

- In January, the program was invited to present at the International Adoptions Workshop. Information was provided to all attendees with an addition to gaining interested couples to the program. Estimated Attendance: 16

- The program has been invited to participate in a community project that will assist adoptive and foster families with necessities and wish lists. PAMS anticipates providing their client list with this opportunity as well as informing other programs that target this population such as Special Needs Adoptions and Florida Baptist Children Homes.

GRANT ACTIVITIES:

October 2007:

Marriage Education:
In-Home Gottman Sessions: 1 Participants: 2 couples
Completions: No Completions

Booster Sessions: 1 Participants: 1 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

OTHER SERVICES:

- MAPP presentation was provided to participants of the Florida Baptist Children’s Home. Facilitators reported a good turnout of approx. 20-25 attendees in addition to receiving referrals for services.

November 2007:

Marriage Education:
In-Home Gottman Sessions: 9 Participants: 2 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

Booster Sessions: 1 Participants: 1 couple(s)
Completions: N/A

OTHER SERVICES:

Program Presentations

- Presented program to families of the Family Preservation program. Received positive feedback from the couples that attended. Attendance: Approx. 6-8
December 2007:

Marriage Education:
In-Home Gottman Sessions: 1 Participants: 1 couple(s)
Completions: 1 Completion

Booster Sessions: 1 Participants: 1 couple(s)
Completions: 1 Completion

OTHER SERVICES:
- 300 flyers regarding the program sent to all 2B District Families in the Leon, Gadsden, and Wakulla counties.

January 2008:

Marriage Education:
In-Home Gottman Sessions: 2 Participants: 1 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

Booster Sessions: 1 Participants: 1 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

OTHER SERVICES:
Number Issued:
- 500 flyers regarding the program sent to all 2B District Families in the Leon, Gadsden, and Wakulla counties.
- 300 quarterly newsletters were mailed out to families in the Leon, Gadsden and Wakulla 2B District.
- A PDF version was sent to all staff throughout North Central Division of Children's Home Society of Florida. Approx. count estimated to over 300.
- January 24th & 31st – International Adoption Training; Counselors gave a presentation about the program. Counselors received a referral from one of the couples that attended the presentation. Approximately 20-30 attendees.
- January 26th – MAPP Training; Counselors participated as panelist and discussed the benefits of the program as an important service for couples that are either planning or currently are adoptive parents. There were a few couples that were potential clients present at this event. Approximately 10-15 attendees.

February 2008:

Marriage Education:
In-Home Gottman Sessions: 6 Participants: 2 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

Booster Sessions: 5 Participants: 2/3 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions
OTHER SERVICES:

MAPP Training
- Facilitators are participating on a weekly basis with attendees to provide further assistance to questions that attendees may have. Attendance is consistently between 12-16 attendees.

Spring Quarterly Newsletter
Number Issued:
- 300 sent to all 2B District Families in the Leon, Gadsden, and Wakulla counties.
- 60 were placed throughout the Children's Home Society of Florida program areas at the Tallahassee main location.
- A PDF version was sent to all staff throughout North Central Division of Children's Home Society of Florida. Approx. count estimated to over 300.

2B Subsidy Mailing List
Number Issued:
- 900 flyers regarding the program was sent to all adoptive and foster families in the Big Bend area.
- 700 leaflets regarding the couple’s presentation for March 8th was sent to all adoptive families in the Big Bend area.

March 2008:

Marriage Education:
In-Home Gottman Sessions: 7 Participants: 6 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

Booster Sessions: 4 Participants: 2 couple(s)
Completions: No Completions

OTHER SERVICES:
- PAMS facilitators participated in MAPP panel presentation with an outcome of 8-10 couples who signed up to receive more information about the program.
- PAMS provided brochures and newsletters to the Family Preservation program for the purpose of marketing the program to other agencies that they work with. Family Preservation has also agreed to assist PAMS in marketing the program by providing contacts and discussing the program to other agencies.
PROBLEMS – CHALLENGES/BARRIERS

Challenges/Barriers:
- Recruitment: Referrals from programs with Children’s Home Society have remained fairly low, primarily due to the staff turnover.
- Client activity is low primarily due to various schedule conflicts of the clients.

Steps to Resolve identified challenges/barriers:
- The program is planning meeting with Interagencies with the purpose of presenting the program and demonstrating the benefits that their families will receive in participating. An email regarding this phase is being sent out on a monthly basis to receive the needed feedback.
- Staff is proactively talking with individual caseworkers and other staff on an informal basis about the program.
- Staff is regularly contacting the Special Needs Adoption program to follow up on client eligibility for the program.
- Staff is regularly contacting clients and working out availability issues to meet the needs of the families.
- PAMS has been consistent with the quarterly newsletter and subsidy mailout, which is distributed every quarter to families in the 2B district counties.
- Presentations at couple orientations and other similar events have resulted increased interest from other clients who may not be in the target population but do see a need for the service.
- Quarterly drawings have proven to be a positive recruitment tool for the program, increasing the commitment of clients who participate as well as recruiting new clients.

Current Outcome: %75 Resolved / %25 Not Resolved

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/COMMENTS:

Activities and ideas for improvement have been planned for the future. The following briefly state these activities:

- PAMS program was approved to provide 24 Foster Parent Training hours to foster families once they have completed the program. This allows families to receive the required 8 hours per year within a shorter amount of time.

- Provide more opportunities for facilitators to attend adoption and marriage enhancement related conferences to increase knowledge of adoption related issues and stay up to date with the field of study.

- Continue in the creation and maintenance of relationships with community partners to increase referrals.
• Participate in subsidy check mailings at BBCBC. A one-page program flyer has been included with the family’s subsidy checks every other month for the 2007-2008 year. This effort has increased consistency in program visibility for potential participants.

• Continue to produce quarterly newsletters that are mailed to special needs adoptive families in Leon, Gadsden, and Wakulla counties. This effort also increased consistency in program visibility for potential participants.

• Create and maintain community partners as potential referral sources by attending support group meetings and establishing relationships and rapport with the leaders of these organizations and their constituents.

• Maintain revisions of program brochures and pamphlets to provide more details about the purpose and importance of the program.

• Plan focus groups for the purpose of gathering information that will benefit the advancement of program development.
### SERVICE LEVEL SUMMARY

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**Total Service Level During this Period**

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**Total Service Level Fiscal Year to Date**

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**Total Service Level Award to Date**

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*Booster Sessions did not begin until late October of 2006.*